

In the Claims

Please replace all prior versions of the claims in the application with the following:

1. (Amended) A boot comprising:

a boot body having a lower region adapted to cover a foot of a wearer and an upper region adapted to cover at least a portion of a shin of the wearer;

a first lacing zone comprising a first lace adapted to tighten a first region of the boot, the first lace having a portion that is disposed at the upper region; and

a second lacing zone comprising a second lace adapted to tighten a second region of the boot, the second lace having a portion that is disposed at the upper region ~~of the boot~~;

wherein both the first lace and the second lace are simultaneously securable at the upper region ~~of the boot~~.

2. (Amended) The boot of claim 1, wherein the first lacing zone comprises a lower lacing zone and wherein the first lace comprises a lower lace that is adapted to tighten the lower region ~~of the boot~~.

3. (Amended) The boot of claim [[1]] 2, wherein the second lacing zone comprises an upper lacing zone and wherein the second lace comprises an upper lace that is adapted to tighten the upper region ~~of the boot~~.

4. (Original) The boot of claim 1, further comprising at least one lace lock mounted to the boot body at the upper region thereof, the at least one lace lock being adapted to secure at least one of the first and second laces.

5. (Original) The boot of claim 4, wherein the at least one lace lock comprises a first lace lock adapted to secure the first lace and a second lace lock adapted to secure the second lace.

6. (Original) The boot of claim 5, wherein the first and second lace locks comprise lace cleats, each cleat comprising a body having opposing walls with locking teeth formed on each wall, the walls converging to form a wedge-shaped channel, the channel and locking teeth cooperating to hold a portion of the lace within the body of the cleat.

7. (Original) The boot of claim 6, wherein the boot body includes a tongue opening disposed in a shin-to-toe direction and a tongue disposed within the opening, wherein each cleat is mounted to the boot body such that each wedge-shaped channel is substantially parallel to the tongue opening.

8. (Original) The boot of claim 1, wherein the boot body comprises a body wall, a first lace channel is disposed in the body wall, a portion of the first lace is disposed within the first lace channel.

9. (Original) The boot of claim 8, further comprising a second lace channel disposed in the body wall, a portion of the second lace is disposed within the second lace channel.

10. (Original) The boot of claim 1, further comprising a plurality of lace guides adapted to receive one of the first and second laces, at least a subset of the plurality of lace guides having a generally C-shaped guiding surface.

11. (Original) The boot of claim 10, wherein at least one of guides comprises at least a partially closed guide that is adapted to capture the lace and prevent the lace from dislodging from the guide when tension in the lace is relieved.

12. (Original) The boot of claim 11, wherein one of the guides comprises an open guide that is adapted to permit the lace to dislodge from the guide when tension in the lace is relieved.

13. (Original) The boot of claim 12, further comprising a release strap coupled to at

least one of the first and second laces, the release strap being graspable by the wearer to remove the lace from the open guide to create slack in the lace.

14. (Original) The boot of claim 1, wherein each of the first and second laces is laced in a lacing pattern characterized in that the lace follows a meandering path and does not cross over itself.

15. (Original) The boot of claim 1, wherein the first lace and the second lace may be tightened independently to achieve different levels of tightness in the first and the second lacing zones.

16. (Amended) The boot of claim 1, further comprising a first handle coupled to ~~wherein the first lace comprises a first free-end portion and a first handle disposed at the first free-end portion~~, the first handle being graspable by the wearer to tighten the first lace.

17. (Amended) The boot of claim 16, further comprising a second handle coupled to ~~wherein the second lace comprises a second free-end portion and a second handle disposed at the second free-end portion~~, the second handle being graspable by the wearer to tighten the second lace.

18. (Amended) The boot of claim 17, wherein the boot body and the first and second handles cooperate to stow ~~comprises at least one pocket adapted to receive at least one of the first and second handles~~, on the boot body.

19. (Amended) The boot of claim 18, wherein the boot body comprises at least one pocket adapted to receive at least one of the first and second handles, ~~wherein the at least one pocket comprises first and second pockets, the first pocket is adapted to receive the first handle, and the second pocket is adapted to receive the second handle~~.

20. (Amended) The boot of claim [[18]] 19, wherein the at least one pocket comprise an elongate opening disposed in a wall of the boot body at the upper region and extending in a substantially vertical orientation.

21. (Original) The boot of claim 20, wherein the at least one pocket comprises first and second pockets, the first pocket is adapted to receive the first handle, and the second pocket is adapted to receive the second handle, and wherein the first pocket is disposed on a first side of the boot body and the second pocket is disposed on a second side of the boot body.

22. (Original) The boot of claim 2, wherein the lower lace comprises a first anchor end attached to the boot body adjacent a toe-area.

23. (Amended) The boot of claim 22, wherein the second lacing zone comprises an upper lacing zone and wherein the second lace comprises an upper lace that is adapted to tighten the upper region of the boot and wherein the upper lace comprises a second anchor end attached to the boot body adjacent a shin-area.

24. (Original) The boot of claim 1, further comprising an indicator to indicate to the wearer that a lace corresponds to a particular lacing zone.

25. (Amended) The boot of claim 1, wherein the boot body includes a rear side, wherein both the first lace and the second lace ~~may be simultaneously secured~~ are securable at the upper region of the boot body forward of the rear side.

26. (Original) The boot of claim 1, wherein the boot is a snowboard boot.

27. (Amended) A boot comprising:

a boot body having a lower region adapted to cover a foot of a wearer, an upper region adapted to cover at least a portion of a shin of the wearer, and a rear side that faces backward when the boot is worn by the wearer;

a first lacing zone comprising a first lace adapted to tighten a first region of the boot, the first lace having a portion that is disposed at the upper region; and

a second lacing zone comprising a second lace adapted to tighten a second region of the boot, the second lace having a portion that is disposed at the upper region ~~of the boot~~;

wherein both the first lace and the second lace are ~~simultaneously~~ securable at a location forward of the rear side ~~to completely secure the boot body to the wearer~~.

28. (Amended) The boot of claim 27, wherein the first lacing zone comprises a lower lacing zone and wherein the first lace comprises a lower lace that is adapted to tighten the lower region ~~of the boot~~.

29. (Amended) The boot of claim [[27]] 28, wherein the second lacing zone comprises an upper lacing zone and wherein the second lace comprises an upper lace that is adapted to tighten the upper region ~~of the boot~~.

30. (Original) The boot of claim 27, further comprising at least one lace lock mounted to the boot body at the upper region thereof, the at least one lace lock is adapted to secure at least one of the first and second laces.

31. (Original) The boot of claim 30, wherein the at least one lace lock comprises a first lace lock adapted to secure the first lace and a second lace lock adapted to secure the second lace.

32. (Original) The boot of claim 31, wherein the first and second lace locks comprise lace cleats, each cleat comprising a body having opposing walls with locking teeth formed on each

wall, the walls converging to form a wedge-shaped channel, the channel and locking teeth cooperating to hold a portion of the lace within the body of the cleat.

33. (Original) The boot of claim 32, wherein the boot body includes a tongue opening disposed in a shin-to-toe direction and a tongue disposed within the opening, wherein each cleat is mounted to the boot body such that each wedge-shaped channel is substantially parallel to the tongue opening.

34. (Original) The boot of claim 27, wherein the boot body comprises a body wall, a first lace channel is disposed in the body wall, a portion of the first lace is disposed within the first lace channel.

35. (Original) The boot of claim 34, further comprising a second lace channel disposed in the body wall, a portion of the second lace is disposed within the second lace channel.

36. (Original) The boot of claim 27, further comprising a plurality of lace guides adapted to receive one of the first and second laces, at least a subset of the plurality of lace guides having a generally C-shaped guiding surface.

37. (Original) The boot of claim 36, wherein at least one of guides comprises at least a partially closed guide that is adapted to capture the lace and prevent the lace from dislodging from the guide when tension in the lace is relieved.

38. (Original) The boot of claim 37, wherein one of the guides comprises an open guide that is adapted to permit the lace to dislodge from the guide when tension in the lace is relieved.

39. (Original) The boot of claim 38, further comprising a release strap coupled to at least one of the first and second laces, the release strap being graspable by the wearer to remove the lace from the open guide to create slack in the lace.

40. (Original) The boot of claim 27, wherein each of the first and second laces is laced in a lacing pattern characterized in that the lace follows a meandering path and does not cross over itself.

41. (Original) The boot of claim 27, wherein the first lace and the second lace may be tightened independently to achieve different levels of tightness in the first and the second lacing zones.

42. (Amended) The boot of claim 27, further comprising a first handle coupled to ~~wherein the first lace comprises a first free end portion and a first handle disposed at the first free-end portion~~, the first handle being graspable by the wearer to tighten the first lace.

43. (Amended) The boot of claim 42, further comprising a second handle coupled to ~~wherein the second lace comprises a second free end portion and a second handle disposed at the second free-end portion~~, the second handle being graspable by the wearer to tighten the second lace.

44. (Amended) The boot of claim 43, wherein the boot body and the first and second handles cooperate to stow ~~comprises at least one pocket adapted to receive at least one of the first and second handles on the boot body~~.

45. (Amended) The boot of claim 44, wherein the boot body comprises at least one pocket adapted to receive at least one of the first and second handles ~~wherein the at least one pocket comprises first and second pockets, the first pocket is adapted to receive the first handle, and the second pocket is adapted to receive the second handle~~.

46. (Amended) The boot of claim [[44]] 45, wherein the at least one pocket comprise an elongate opening disposed in a wall of the boot body at the upper region and extending in a substantially vertical orientation.

47. (Original) The boot of claim 46, wherein the at least one pocket comprises first and second pockets, the first pocket is adapted to receive the first handle, and the second pocket is adapted to receive the second handle, and wherein the first pocket is disposed on a first side of the boot body and the second pocket is disposed on a second side of the boot body.

48. (Original) The boot of claim 28, wherein the lower lace comprises a first anchor end attached to the boot body adjacent a toe-area.

49. (Amended) The boot of claim 48, wherein the second lacing zone comprises an upper lacing zone and wherein the second lace comprises an upper lace that is adapted to tighten the upper region of the boot and wherein the upper lace comprises a second anchor end attached to the boot body adjacent a shin-area.

50. (Original) The boot of claim 27, further comprising an indicator to indicate to the wearer that a lace corresponds to a particular lacing zone.

51. (Cancelled)

52. (Original) The boot of claim 27, wherein the boot is a snowboard boot.

53.-126. (Cancelled)

127. (Original) A soft snowboard boot comprising:
a boot body formed of flexible material, the boot body having a lower region adapted to cover a foot of a rider and an upper region adapted to cover at least a portion of a shin of the rider;
a plurality of lace guides mounted to the boot body, at least one of the lace guides comprising a lace hook;

a first lacing zone comprising a first lace and a first lace lock mounted to the boot body in the upper region, the first lace being guided by the lace guides and cooperating with the lower region, the first lace adapted to extend through and engage with the first lace lock to tighten the lower region, the first lace having a portion that extends from the lower region to the upper region so as to be engageable with the first lace lock;

a second lacing zone comprising a second lace and a second lace lock mounted to the boot body in the upper region, the second lace being guided by the lace guides and the lace hook and cooperating with the upper region, the second lace adapted to extend through and engage with the second lace lock to tighten the upper region;

wherein both the first and second laces may be simultaneously secured by the first and second lace locks, respectively, in the upper region of the boot body forward of a rear side of the boot body; and

a release strap coupled to the second lace, the release strap being graspable to remove the second lace from the hook so as to create slack in the second lace.

128. (New) The boot of claim 1, wherein both the first lace and the second lace are sequentially or simultaneously securable at the upper region.

129. (New) The boot of claim 24, wherein the indicator comprises a first indicator on the first lace, wherein the first indicator comprises the word "LOWER".

130. (New) The boot of claim 24, wherein the indicator comprises a second indicator on the second lace, wherein the second indicator comprises the word "UPPER".

131. (New) The boot of claim 27, wherein both the first lace and the second lace are sequentially or simultaneously securable at the location forward of the rear side.

132. (New) The boot of claim 50, wherein the indicator comprises a first indicator on the first lace, wherein the first indicator comprises the word "LOWER".

133. (New) The boot of claim 50, wherein the indicator comprises a second indicator on the second lace, wherein the second indicator comprises the word "UPPER".